Special Court for Sierra Leone
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 29 May 2008

Justice Renate Winter Elected President of Special Court

Justice Renate Winter of Austria has been unanimously elected to a one-year term, effective 30 May, as Presiding Judge of the Appeals Chamber, a post which makes her President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. She succeeds Justice George Gelaga-King of Sierra Leone, who has served as President since 2006.

Justice Winter has previously served as international judge of the Supreme Court of Kosovo, as part of the United Nations interim civilian administration. She is an expert on family law, as well as on juvenile justice systems, women's justice issues, pedophilia, child labour and the role of the media in advocacy.

Since 1981, Justice Winter has been a Judge at the Vienna Youth Court, where she has undertaken projects to help rehabilitate youth with problems of drug addiction and mental disability. Justice Winter has also worked on projects relating to youth and child soldiers for the United Nations, including in numerous African countries. She also has dealt with issues of organized crime and restorative justice. Throughout the 1990s, Justice Winter chaired numerous international conferences on matters relating to juvenile justice and gender-related justice issues. She is currently President of the International Association of Youth and Family Court Judges.

Justice Winter joined the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2002. She served as Acting President of the Special Court from March to May 2004.

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The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

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